

A brief MEMORIAL of what hath been done in former Times, concerning the Making and repairing of DOVER HARBOUR, and the present state thereof.

Although the first defence of Dover Harbour was a round Tower made by a private person, one *John Clarke* Priest, Master of the *Maison de Dieu*, about the year 1500, in which he made many Rings to fasten and moore Ships; and for the safety and pleasantness of it was called, *Little Paradise*. Yet when the making a formal and regular Harbour came into consideration, and that it was the opinion of all skilful Mariners of that time, that a mean Harbour at Dover would be more beneficial than an excellent Harbour in any place else about the Coast of England: Sir *John Thompson*, Parson of *St. James* in Dover, stirred up the Townsmen to entertain the project of obtaining a Harbour, and represent the design to King *Henry the 8th.* who unanimously joyned together, did imploy the said Sir *John Thompson* to the King for that purpose, allowing him for his support in his addresses, and following the business, 4. l. — 10. s.

The King liked the design so well, that he forthwith ordered 500 l. out of his own Coffers to make a beginning of the work, and gave the Mastership of the *Maison de Dieu* to Sir *John Thompson*, an Hospital valued at 120 l. per an. founded for relief of poor Souldiers from beyond Sea, fourteen days gratis) and appointed the said Sir *John Thompson* to be principal Surveyor of the Works, and under him four others to be Overseers.

Sir *John Thompsons* design was to erect a Wall, which he called a Peere, from *Haclyffe* Chappel (being the South-West part of the Bay) directly towards the East, about 131 Rods in length. But this Peere was not finished, by 350 Foot so far as the Foundation was laid, (called the Mole-Head) consisting of great Rocks, brought from *Haclyffe*, the *Castle Roy*, and *Folkstone*. This Peere was begun on *St. Anns* day, Anno 1533.

A poor man one *John Young*, who first with a Nut-shel, then with an Egg-shel, and lastly with a small Vessel, made proof what weight those things could raise and bear in the water, first found out the carrying huge Stones of 20 Tuns apiece and more, by tying Iron Chains to them at low Water, and then buoying them up with empty Vessels, and so dragging them up to the Peere where they were to sink them, the Chalk and filling for the Peere being carried thither in great Boats, called a Gaboth, which had nine Keels. The King gave this man in reward of his invention, a Pension for his Life of 4 d. per diem.

The King spent 50 thousand pounds upon the Works, and several times in person viewed them, often imploying the Counsel and direction of all skilful men in Water-works, both at home and abroad: But by reason of the Kings absence at *Bullen*, his sickness at his return, his Death, and Nonage of *Edward the 6th.* there was no Provision made for maintenance of the Works which had been done about the Peere. And they coming once in state of decay, nothing was done towards it till Queen *Maries* time, when for two years some matter was attempted, the Mayor of Dover and his Brethren having got license under the Great Seal to gather monies throughout England: but the Workmen being ill paid, all was given over again.

Before the end of the Work a South-West wind brought a marvelous quantity of Beach and Boulder-stone, never seen before on that Coast; so that by this, and the Peere decaying through want of Provision for its support and maintenance, and especially by the poorer sort disorderly pulling the Timber and Iron of that in pieces, was not looked after; the Haven was so lost, that a Boat drawing but four foot water could not enter into the mouth thereof.

Thus the decay of the Haven at Dover, and the loss of *Calais*, hapning both about one time, made such an utter desolation there, that of a brave rich and populous Town, it became presently a poor and desolate Village: But still there remained a strong opinion in all men, for renewing the Haven in that place.

Queen *Elizabeth* therefore granted to the Town of Dover towards repairing their Harbour, free Transportation of 30000 quarters of Wheat, 10000 quarters of Barley and Mault, and 4000 Tun of Beer, free of Custom and Impost; which Patent of the Queen was sold to *John Bird* and *Thomas Watts* Merchants, at 2. l. — 4. s. for Wheat, and 2. l. — 8. s. for Barley and Mault; and the License of Beer being sold to others, came to longer; and afterwards 35 *Eliz.* 7. continued after the time limited aforesaid, till the end of the Parliament then next ensuing; and 43 *Eliz.* 9. continued yet further till the end of the first Session of next Parliament; and 1 *Jae.* 32. from the end of that Parliament for 7 years; after which time it only expired, having so many years enjoyed the benefit of so great assistance. The 14 *Car.* 2. An Act was passed for the raising of 22000 l. for the repairing of Dover Harbour by a Tax of 3 d. per Tun on the Lading of every Vessel not exceeding 250 Tuns, except Vessels laden with Coals, Culme and Purbeck Stone which were to pay but 1 d. per Tun, which Act was to continue for 7 years. By all which it is evident, how it hath been the immediate Care of the Kings and Queens of this Realm, and of the Parliaments thereof, to protect and preserve this Harbour at Dover, tending so much to the Honour of the Crown, safety of the Nation, and advantage of Trade.

For,

1. It is stated on the Narrow, between England and France; so that Foreign Ambassadors, and other Great Personages, and Strangers do usually Land there; where they find all good accommodations for their travel to London.
2. It is the principal seat of all Jurisdiction within the Ports, the Courts of Admiralty and Chancery being constantly held here.
3. It is a great Store-house of Provisions for his Majesties Navy, there being in this Port one of his principal Victualling-Offices for the Fleets when they shall be at Sea. And in the late War was seen to be of great use and benefit to his Majesties Service.
4. In time of War the Harbour of Dover is a great protection and safeguard to his Majesties Ships of the lower Rate, when they find the Enemy too strong for them at Sea: And a great advantage at other times, when they may take liberty to Cruise the Channel at pleasure, and secure their Prizes in few hours; of which in the late War with Holland and France there was sufficient experience.
5. The Harbour of Dover being in its situation the chiefest Port in the Southern part of England, between Harwich and Portsmouth, is of great importance to the Ships of Merchants in time of Peace, where upon accident of a Leak or other dammage, they may presently put in here, and be fitted for their intended Voyage.
6. The Customs of this Port have in times of Trade, before the late Civil Wars, (peculiar only to this Port) amounted to Fifty Thousand pounds per annum.
7. His Majesties Frigats of the 4 or 5 Rates, and under, out of the Downs and Channel, may and have used to come into this Harbour, and there Victual, Wash, and Tallow, and go to Sea again in few Tides.
8. This Port is and always hath been a great Nursery for able Mariners, and a proper station for Pilots to conduct Ships through all the Flats and Sands, either in his Majesties Service, or Merchants.
9. That the moneys payable by the said Act of the 14. Car. 2. was by the Act to be Collected by his Majesties Officers of the Custom-house, and by them to be paid to the Commissioners of Dover Harbour, who received only 9300 l. thereupon. Which not being sufficient to perfect the work, the said Harbour is since much impaired, and by the many Storms that have lately hapned, the Sea hath gained much upon it. So that unless some speedy Remedy be taken, not only the said Harbour, but the whole Town is like to be lost inevitably, to the Ruine of many hundred Families, and the Universal damage of the Nation.

It is therefore humbly recommended to the Wisdom of the Parliament, to make such provision for remedy thereof, as the necessity of the Work requires, and hath always been the care of former times,

